

January 10, 2005

Terry & Sylvia Greer
496 CR 253
Mico, TX 78056

Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

ET-1335

received
1/11/05

Attention: Rini Ghosh
Fax No. (202) 565-9000

Re: STB Docket No. 34284

Dear Ms. Ghosh:

My wife and I have been residents of the Medina Oaks subdivision since April of 2000. Our residence is located about ½ mile north of the proposed quarry site and have several concerns about the proposed rail line and quarry.

Thank you for sending a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). In reviewing the DEIS we feel there are several issues that effect the proposed SGR railway to the Vulcan Quarry Site. I am submitting the following comments regarding the DEIS and the Vulcan Quarry.

Water Quality: I am concerned about the effects the quarry will have on water wells. Our well head is located about 100 feet above the proposed quarry elevation. The static water level of our well is 290 feet and is our only source of water. We understand that the quarry is located over the Edwards recharge zone. It is also our understanding that Vulcan plans to locate diesel storage tanks above the recharge zone. Is this prohibited? We also understand that dynamiting releases nitrates into the soil which eventually seeps into the water supply. We have additional concerns that quarrying to a depth of 200-250 feet will not leave enough substrate above the Edwards Aquifer to filter out the nitrates and diesel. If our water supply becomes contaminated or if wells run dry after the quarry process begins, who will be liable for damages? Will water quality monitoring stations be installed to monitoring the proposed railway and quarry to assure compliance with water quality standards?

Air Quality: I am concerned about the effects the railway and quarry will have on the air quality. I am an Asthmatic and have concerns about the increase of dust particulate that will be generated by the blasting, crushing and transporting of limestone. With a south prevailing wind the dust will travel north toward our residence. Vulcan Materials should be required to provide dust abatement equipment at each dust emitting location. Will air monitoring stations be installed to insure that Vulcan and SGR compiles with the air quality standards? Test reports should be made available to local residents and property owners.

Noise Levels: We are concerned about the increased noise levels around the quarry and the rail lines. We can hear the passing Union Pacific trains 10 miles away. We are concerned about the increased noise level of proposed railroad and quarry 3 miles away. We feel noise level monitoring stations should be installed around the proposed quarry and rail line. Test reports should be made available to local residents and property owners.

Environmental Impact: My wife and I choose Medina Oaks as tranquil natural habitat in the hill country to build our home. Much of the value of our homestead is attributed to the tranquility and beauty of the natural habitat that surrounds our property. Why should SGR and Vulcan be permitted to profit by the destruction of this beautiful habitat.

Major Transportation Concerns: We are concerned that a grade level railway will increase local travel delays, traffic hazards, flooding and road maintenance. We feel the DEIS did not sufficiently address the impact the effects the SGR railway will have on the local area. Below are the concerns we feel were insufficiently addressed:

1. Grade separation at FM 2676 to prevent traffic delays and accidents .
2. Flooding due to railroad berms, trestles and culverts.
3. Train wrecks and derailments.
4. Increased noise levels caused by train engines and blowing of horns at the 6 to 9 railroad crossings 24 hours per day.
5. Diesel fuel spillage.
6. Increased dust from transporting material in uncovered railcars.
7. Damage to FM 2676 not designed for transporting 78,000 lb. gravel trucks and the traffic delays due to road maintenance.
8. The additional cost to maintain FM 2676 at the expense of local tax payer.
9. Having our land condemned by a private railroad company.
10. Damage to nearby historic structures due to flooding, vibration, dust and diesel fumes.

We feel the DEIS did not include a complete study on the times and duration of rail traffic across any and all roads without grade separation, the effect of the delays, derailment, frequency, probability of accidents, stopping distances, noise levels and vibration, spills of chemicals and diesel fuels, or other hazardous materials being transported.

The DEIS did not include a full flood analysis of the proposed and alternative routes of the railroad, and the quarry site as well, including avoidance of debris clogging the trestles during flooding.

The DEIS did not include a study of the effects of the truck traffic on FM2676 and the unimproved county roads, and the increase in maintenance, the dangers to other vehicles, etc., the roads periodically closed for repair, for all routes, proposed and alternatives.

The DEIS did not include a study on the cumulative effects that new industries brought in by the rail and quarry will have on the Quihi area, with a full cost/benefit study.

As a tax paying property owner we would appreciate your attention to the above issues.

Sincerely,

Terry Greer

cc: U.S. Congressman Henry Bonilla
U.S. Senator John Cornyn
Texas Senator Frank Madla
Texas Representative Timoteo Garza
Medina County Judge Jim Barden
Medina County Commissioner Chris Mitchell
Railroad Commissioner Victor G. Carrillo